England [Appendix. — Trade & Commerce]
K.

A

(3)

SHORT VIEW

OF THE

PROPOSALS

LATELY MADE FOR THE

FINAL ADJUSTMENT

OF THE

COMMERCIAL SYSTEM

BETWEEN

GREAT-BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

LONDON:
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A

SHORT VIEW, &c.

THE Propoſals from Ireland, for ſettling the Trade between this Country and that, upon principles of equity and mutual benefit; and above all, for uniting more cloſely the two Kingdoms, are undoubtedly of the greateſt national importance. With this view, it is material to examine, whether the objections raiſed, outweigh the manifeſt advantage of ſuch a ſettlement.

It is intended therefore, to ſtate briefly a few facts, in order to ſhew what Ireland enjoys already, from former conceſſions, ſo as to be able

to appretiate juſtly what is now propoſed to be given, for the important purpoſes before ſtated.

It was the Act of the 15th of Charles II. ch. 7, which for the firſt time confined to England alone, the liberty of ſending European produce to the Colonies, with a reſervation to Ireland to ſend ſervants, horſes, and victual; ſome few other articles have been allowed to be ſent from thence by ſubſequent ſtatutes.

It was 22 and 23 Charles II. ch. 26, which firſt prohibited Tobacco, Sugar, Cotton, Dyeing Woods, and other enumerated produce of the Britiſh Colonies, from being ſent to Ireland, except through England: Both theſe Acts were explained and enforced by ſubſequent Acts of Parliament:

liament: So that in Law and in Fact, none of the enumerated produce of the Britiſh Plantations, before mentioned, could be brought to Ireland in any other manner except through England, from that early period, to the year 1780.

It was at this time, when the Iriſh Parliament had aſked ſpecifically for a Free Trade, as a redreſs of their grievances, that Lord North propoſed and carried through the Act of 20 George III. ch. 10; this Law completely opened the direct Trade between Ireland and the Britiſh Plantations in America and Africa: For it enacted, That any goods which may be legally imported from Britiſh America and Africa into Britain, may, in like manner, be directly

rectly imported from the ſaid Plantations into Ireland; that goods may in the ſame direct manner be ſent from Ireland to the ſaid Colonies and Settlements; on condition however of paying the ſame duties in Ireland as ſhall be paid in Britain, and allowing the ſame draw-back. The Levant Trade was opened to Ireland during the ſame Seſſion, by the 20 George III. ch. 18.

When, in ſuperaddition to theſe extenſive grants, Mr. Fox propoſed and carried through the Act of 22 George III. ch. 53, for admitting the Independence of the Iriſh Legiſlature, Ireland was left free, at it's own diſcretion, to regulate it's Commerce to all Foreign Countries; every Britiſh Act of Parliament with regard

gard to Commerce or the Cuſtoms, ceaſed to be of any authority in Ireland. Lord North's Act delivered over to the Iriſh all the advantages of the Colony Trade;—Mr. Fox's Act gave to Ireland the Independent direction of it's Commerce with Foreigners. By the firſt meaſure, the Iriſh were allowed to import directly all the articles of Weſt India Produce. By the ſecond, the Iriſh were enabled to ſend them, as they pleaſed, to all the Markets in Europe. It is not intended to diſpute the propriety of theſe firſt conceſſions, though perhaps the mode of them might well be queſtioned; but whatever diſadvantages have reſulted, or may reſult, from either, or both of them, ought at leaſt to be traced up to their original ſources.

While

While the Iriſh Trade was in this manner made free to the Levant and to Europe, Africa and America; that with Great Britain continued fettered by various reſtrictions; and in conſequence, there ſubſiſted a thouſand embarraſſments in the Commerce between the Siſter-kingdoms, which ought on the contrary to be cheriſhed as a Coaſt Trade. It is to be remembered too, that when the important conceſſions before enumerated were made by thoſe Miniſters, nothing was required, at leaſt nothing was ſtipulated in return. No meaſure was then adopted for giving effect to the Act of Navigation, ſo delivered over (to uſe Mr. Fox's *preſent language*) to the cuſtody of the Iriſh Cuſtom-houſe Officers; and yet

yet theſe ſame men, with a happy conſiſtency for which they are ſo famous, now urge this as a charge againſt the Syſtem at preſent propoſed.

Nothing was, however, done by either of them, towards examining into the ſtate of the Manufactories of the two countries, with a view of removing the preſent, or guarding againſt future difficulties, and putting them on a footing of reciprocal advantages, ſo as to give a ſpur to the induſtry and exertions of each.

The war of drawbacks and bounties, the claims of equalizing and protecting duties, the agreements for non-importation and non-conſumption of Britiſh Manufactures, and a general ſpirit of jealouſy and diſcontent, were the natural conſequences of theſe omiſſions.

In this diſtracted ſtate were the affairs of Ireland delivered over to the preſent Miniſters; and, in conſequence of their inveſtigations, propoſals are now made to Parliament for a final ſettlement between the two kingdoms, which may be collected under three heads: 1ſt, That the produce of each kingdom ſhall be imported into the other upon equal duties, taking for that purpoſe the loweſt rate of duty in each. 2dly, That Foreign Goods which had been imported into either, may be carried to the other, upon the ſame duties as if coming directly from the place of their growth: And, 3dly, That beſides ſupporting the Civil and Military Eſtabliſhment of Ireland, means ſhall be concerted for providing

ing a Revenue applicable to the more general purpoſes of the Empire.

To the firſt meaſure what reaſonable man can object, who conſiders the ſituation of both kingdoms, as to their religion and laws, their credit and capital, their induſtry and ingenuity; and who adverts to the fact, that the Britiſh Manufactures have for years, ſucceſsfully carried on a competition with the Iriſh in their own Market, though they went thither loaded with taxes and charges of importation and ſale?

If, however, any man entertains a doubt on this ſubject, let him ſuſpend his opinion till the Evidence is produced which was promiſed by the Miniſter in the Houſe of Commons, and ſtated to be the reſult of an ac-

curate inveſtigation of every Manufacture which can be affected by the arrangement; and let him in the mean time recollect, that the Iriſh Manufactures will come into this country burdened with duties, in general amounting to 10l. per cent. which is ſurely a ſufficient protection for eſtabliſhed Manufactures againſt any competition.

To the ſecond meaſure ſome objections have indeed been made, chiefly with a view to the Weſt-India Trade. It is ſuggeſted, that French Sugars will be ſmuggled from the Weſt-Indies to Ireland, and from thence to Britain. It is ſaid, as before mentioned, that the cuſtody of the Act of Navigation is delivered to Ireland: And it is moreover aſ-

ſerted,

ſerted, that a breach would be made in that great bulwwark of our maritime ſtrength.

As to the firſt objection, it is ſurely apparent, that as the Law now ſtands upon Lord North's conceſſion, Sugars may be equally ſmuggled from the Weſt-Indies to Ireland, and may be thence ſmuggled to Britain, with almoſt equal eaſe as if they were admitted a lawful entry from Ireland to England.

Againſt this illicit Trade we have a double ſecurity; the invariable policy of France, confirmed by innumerable Edicts, has been to prevent all foreign ſhips taking on board Sugars, &c. in their Colonies; and our Laws, both in England and Ireland, poſitively prohibit the importation of

ſuch

ſuch produce from any parts, except from our own Colonies. It ſhould be conſidered alſo, that Sugar, from its bulky package, cannot eaſily be ſhipped or landed fraudulently; and that, from its periſhable nature, it is liable to ſuſtain great loſs in removal; it cannot be put on ſhore in open bays which ſmugglers frequent with other articles, but muſt be landed in ſome port.

Can the Iriſh ſmuggler enter into competition with the American ſmuggler for the ſame article? Can the Iriſh ſmuggler carry with *him* a ſufficient equivalent in credit or goods, to buy a cargo of Sugars, conſidering how much the French Sugars have riſen in price ſince the Peace? But, laſtly, would the ſmuggler find an adequate

adequate advantage for his riſques and his voyage, conſidering the ſmall duty on Sugar, in compariſon with its value, and conſidering the competition he would meet with from the Sugars lawfully imported?

As to the ſecond objection, it may be allowed, that as far as the Act of Navigation is to operate as a law of Ireland, the execution of it muſt be entruſted to the Iriſh Revenue Officers: To their cuſtody it was delivered by Lord North and Mr. Fox in 1780 and 1782; and there ſeems no valid reaſon for ſuppoſing, that the Iriſh Officers are leſs worthy of truſt than the Cuſtom-houſe Officers in the Colonies, or even in England. There is the ſame gradation of offices in the one kingdom as in the other,

other, from the Commiſſioners of the Revenue to the Tidewaiter, who are all equally bound to execute their truſt, and who may be all removed, if any miſconduct ſhall be found.

That the opening and extending ſtill more the Navigation between the ports of the Siſter Kingdoms, would deſtroy or enfeeble the principle of the Navigation Act, is an objection which ſurely requires ſome proof or explanation. The great purpoſe of that juſtly celebrated Law is, to raiſe the greateſt poſſible number of native ſhipping and ſeamen. Our Coaſting Trade has beſt anſwered this valuable purpoſe, by breeding the greateſt number of excellent ſeamen, who by returning the moſt frequently into port, may be the ſooneſt had when their ſervices are wanted.

Iriſh

Iriſh ſhips and ſeamen were declared by the Act of Navigation itſelf to be Engliſh ſhips and ſeamen, which was in this reſpect expreſsly re-enacted in 1778; they are conſequently entitled to the ſame privileges, and ſubject to the ſame ſervices.

But in truth it does not appear, how the Regulations now propoſed will have the effect of increaſing the ſhips and ſeamen of Ireland to the extent which has been imagined.—The ſurplus produce of Europe, which Ireland may have to ſpare after ſatisfying her domeſtic demands, may, as the Law now ſtands, be ſent to England under a liberal conſtruction of the Act of Navigation and the eſtabliſhed practice. This branch of

Commerce will then undergo no alteration.—Ireland has not yet engaged in the African Trades—She will not probably enter into a ſucceſsful competition in it with Liverpool: From this ſource, therefore, Ireland is not likely to have any ſurplus to ſpare.

During the ſix years that ſhe has enjoyed the Weſt India Trade, ſhe has not yet ſupplied her own conſumption; for there were exported from England to Ireland

In 1774,	of Sugar,	172,406 Cwt.
In 1784,	of Ditto,	114,629 Cwt.
In 1774,	of Rum,	363,822 Gallons.
In 1784,	of Ditto,	239,241 Gallons.

And nearly in the ſame proportion of other Weſt India Produce.

Ire-

Ireland has therefore to ſmuggle for ſuch a conſumption as that, before ſhe can ſend the articles into England to advantage;—the chances of the prices being accidentally lower here will never be an inducement, as the Markets fluctuate almoſt daily: Sugars therefore ſhipped at Cork or Waterford, with a view to a better price in London, Briſtol, or Liverpool, may come to a worſe than at home, with all the charges of freight, inſurance, Cuſtom-houſe fees, and waſte, which laſt is conſiderable.

It may be worth enquiring how the Iriſh are to procure the Sugars, which ſome perſons are ſo apprehenſive will be ſent through Ireland to Britain: They muſt get the Weſt India produce, either by conſignment or purchaſe.

If the Planter chooſes to conſign his Sugars there with a view to ſelling them, he may do it now; but he will never ſend them there in order to come afterwards to this Country. Will the Planter, who is already very frequent under covenant to conſign his Sugars to his Merchant, from whom in ſuch caſes he expects advances, ſend his Sugars to Ireland, where he can expect little credit? Or, will any Planter conſign his produce to Ireland, where it muſt be ſold at ſix months credit, in preference to England, where it is ſold at a leſs riſque, payable in two months? Glaſgow has never had many conſignments, becauſe, like Ireland, her Market is narrow.

The

The Iriſh then muſt purchaſe the Sugars which they want. It is calculated, that one Cargo of Iriſh produce, will purchaſe only half the lading of the ſhip which carried it out; the other half muſt be purchaſed with Bills, for which an Indorſer muſt be found at the expence of two pounds and an half per cent. The Proviſions always go to a precarious Market in the Weſt Indies: The Sugars, which is liable to a great waſte and other damages, alſo comes to a precarious Market in Europe; and it is a fact, that owing to the before-mentioned Cauſes, the Weſt India Trade has already proved almoſt as fatal to the Iriſh Merchants, as the American Trade has done to the Traders of France.

The

The Iriſh Merchant who had it in his power to bring the produce of the Colonies directly to this Country, was enabled under Lord North's Law, to invoice a Cargo to be delivered pact at Cork or Waterford, and pact at Briſtol or London; is it then poſſible to conceive, that under the propoſed extenſion, he will import circuitouſly after a landing in Ireland, under all the diſadvantages of double freight, inſurances, Cuſtom-houſe fees, &c. &c &c. as before obſerved, what ſhe can now import directly?

Conſidering then how much Ireland already enjoys under the conceſſions of the laſt ſeven years, the allowing her to re-ſhip her ſurplus Sugars to Britain, is a boon ſcarcely worth a conteſt. Conſidering too,

that

that her Sugars muſt thus come into competition with the Sugars directly imported, there is ſurely not much ground for apprehenſion.

The queſtion as to the Act of Navigation may be thus briefly ſummed up: From former conceſſions, the Trade of Ireland is free to Foreign Nations; it is only limited as to her Siſter Kingdom. European produce ſhe may now ſend here; the produce of Africa and the Weſt-Indies ſhe cannot ſend, if ſhe had them. If Ireland gains no more by her American Trade than France, who is ſtill obliged to buy Tobacco in London, ſhe will not ſoon have much Colony produce to ſpare; for although ſhe has ſome local advantages, ſhe is infinitely behind

behind France in Means of purchaſing, and in Credit.

What valid reaſon can be given, then, for with-holding the little that on this head of the buſineſs is aſked, making, as it does, a part of a whole Syſtem, which will ſecure to this Country a conſtant and increaſing aſſiſtance towards defraying the general expences of the Empire. To judge of this proſpect, it is worth while to ſtate, that the hereditary Revenue, the ſurplus of which is to be appropriated to this purpoſe, produced, in the year ending at Lady-day laſt, 659,000 l. which in 1684 amounted to no more than 234,076l. as appears by a Manuſcript in the Harleian Collection. During the late Peace it continued increaſing from 586,369l.

586,369 l. in 1763, to 694,961 l. in 1777.

If Ireland increaſed thus rapidly in her reſources during the long period of her oppreſſion, what may we not expect the produce to be when ſhe is relieved therefrom?

It is impoſſible to review the general heads of this Revenue without perceiving, that the Trade, Manufactures, or Population of Ireland cannot increaſe, without the effect being felt in the proportionable augmentation of that Revenue: The only ſuppoſition, therefore, on which it can be imagined that nothing conſiderable will ariſe from it to the general ſupport of the Empire, muſt be, that Ireland will derive no advantages from this Arrangement, or

from the benefits of which she is now in possession.

Upon the whole of this interesting business, let it be considered, that it is now undertaken, for the first time, to obtain a final settlement of every great Commercial Point between the two Countries; that this is brought forward upon the most mature deliberation, and on the fullest investigation; and let every impartial man decide, when he has seen all the Evidence which is to be offered in support of the Arrangement, whether it will be most for the advantage of this Country to acquiesce with a settlement which must necessarily unite the two Countries for ever, and promote their mutual advantage, rendering

dering Ireland a ſource of wealth and ſtrength to this Country; or to reject it, and abide by all the ill conſequences which will follow to both Kingdoms, by a revival of jealouſies, contentions, and jarring intereſts.

THE END.

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Much as SHAKSPEARE has been read of late years, and largely as the admiration and ſtudy of him have been extended, there is ſtill a numerous claſs of men to whom he is imperfectly known. Many of the middling and lower ranks of the inhabitants of this country are either not acquainted with him at all, excepting by name, or have only ſeen a few of his plays, which have accidentally fallen in their way. It is to ſupply the wants of theſe perſons that the preſent Edition is principally undertaken; and it cannot fail of becoming to them a perpetual ſource of entertainment and inſtruction. That they will derive the higheſt entertainment from it, no one can deny; for it does not require any extraordinary degree of knowledge or education to enter into the general ſpirit of SHAKSPEARE. The paſſions he deſcribes are the paſſions which are felt by every human being; and his wit and humour are not local, or confined to the cuſtoms of a particular age, but are ſuch as will give pleaſure at all times, and to men of all ranks, from the higheſt to the loweſt.

But the inſtruction that may be drawn from SHAKSPEARE is equal to the entertainment which his writings afford. He is the greateſt maſter of human nature, and of human life, that, perhaps, ever exiſted; ſo that we cannot peruſe his works without having our underſtandings conſiderably enlarged. Beſides this, he abounds in occaſional maxims and reflections, which are calculated to make a deep impreſſion upon the mind. There is ſcarcely any circumſtance in the common occurrences of the world, on which ſomething may not be found peculiarly applicable in SHAKSPEARE; and at the ſame time, better expreſſed than in any other author. To promote, therefore, knowledge of him, is to contribute to the general improvement.

Nor is the utility of the preſent publication confined to perſons of the rank already deſcribed; it will be found ſerviceable to thoſe whoſe ſituations in life have enabled them

to

to purchaſe all the expenſive editions of our great dramatiſt; The book now offered to the public may commodiouſly be taken into a coach or poſt chaiſe, for amuſement in a journey; or if a company of gentlemen ſhould happen, in converſation, to mention SHAKSPEARE, or to diſpute concerning any particular paſſage, a volume, containing the whole of his plays may, with great convenience be fetched by a ſervant out of a library or cloſet. In ſhort, any particular paſſage may, at all times, and with eaſe, be recurred to. It is a compendium, not an abridgement, of the nobleſt of our poets, and a library in a ſingle volume.

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